

Appln No. 09/688,456
Amdt date March 1, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

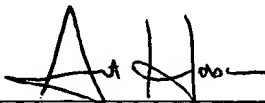
Claims 1-70 are presently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the application based on the following response. As an initial matter, Applicants request that the Examiner consider and provide an initialed copy of the August 8, 2003 Information Disclosure Statement Form 1449. Applicants did not receive a copy of the initialed form with the Office Action.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 7-9, 11-14, 17-36, 39-44 and 52-70 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Whitehouse, U.S. Patent 6,005,945 in view of Ulvr et al., U.S. Patent 6,415,983. The Examiner rejected the remaining claims, i.e., claims 2-6, 10, 15, 16, 37, 38 and 45-51, as allegedly being unpatentable over Whitehouse and Ulvr et al. further in view of Leon, U.S. Patent 6,424,954.

As the issue date of Ulvr et al. is after the filing date of the present application, but its filing date is before the filing date of the present application, Ulvr et al. is presumptively prior art under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e). Applicants, however, submit that they had invented the claimed subject matter prior to the filing date of the Ulvr reference. Applicants hereby submit the attached Affidavit under 37 CFR 1.131 of Craig Ogg to overcome Ulvr et al. and remove it as a reference in connection with the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a). Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 must be withdrawn.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP

By 

Art Hasan
Reg. No. 41,057
626/795-9900

SAH/amb